

(Washington, DC)— Congresswoman Gwen Moore successfully fought late last night to halt an unethical study of Upward Bound – a program that helps young students prepare for college – that would use an unfair bait and switch process to recruit students. Without Moore’s amendment, the study would have actively recruited more students than could be served and then exclude the rejected students from ever receiving Upward Bound services while in High School – just to see how much their performance suffered as a result.

In 2006, about 3,062 Milwaukee students were enrolled in TRIO Projects, a program – which includes Upward Bound programs – that helps students prepare to attend and graduate from college. Of these Milwaukee students, 587 were enrolled in an Upward Bound program.

“I was able to excel in college because of programs like Upward Bound and it is reprehensible that this administration wanted to conduct a study to the detriment of students who simply want to get ahead in life,” Congresswoman Gwen Moore said. “My amendment would put a halt to a study that deceives students and takes away critical opportunities from them. This study is just another sneaky attempt to undermine the credibility of a critical and successful program for underprivileged students.”

Rep. Moore, joined by Reps. Carol Shea-Porter, Tom Cole and Bobby Scott, offered an amendment during debate of the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill late last night to specifically prohibit funds from being used to carry out an unethical study of the Upward Bound program proposed by the Education Department. The Labor-HHS-Education bill is expected to pass the House later today.

The study would have recruited twice as many students as the program could serve without disclosing the recruitment efforts to the students and families. The program would then serve just half of those students and ask the other half to be part of the study. Those who become part of the study – and even those who refuse – would be permanently excluded from receiving Upward Bound services for the duration of their high school career.

Negative results of the program would have included damaged relationships between the UB projects and student populations. Furthermore, the underprivileged students who want to succeed and are actively seeking support services would be turned away and steered to be involved in a study.

“This study was an obvious bait and switch -- appearing to recruit students for the program but really recruiting them for an experiment,” Moore said. “I will not stand by and watch as a service that we know can help disadvantaged students is withheld from half of the students actively recruited for the program – just to study how much they suffer academically as a result. These are struggling underprivileged students actively seeking to change their lives, not lab rats to be manipulated and studied.”

Upward Bound is one of the many programs offered by TRIO Programs, which are funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. TRIO programs work to help low-income students overcome class, social and cultural barriers to education by providing critical services and programming. Two-thirds of TRIO participants’ families make less than \$28,000 a year.

The amendment passed the House late last night by a voice vote. The Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill is expected to pass the House later today and will then be pending in the Senate.

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